



Tehaluhyawá·ku.

[s.l.]: [s.n.], 1970/1979

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Skyholder

They have a story among the six nations about the one they called Skyholder. They say he lives in the sky. One time he heard someone crying here on earth. He looked down and it seems there were men and women there. They were fearful of such fierce beasts around here and also really giant men. So this Skyholder came down and led the people to a place where nothing would happen to them. After he had come down for quite a while, he settled here on earth and he changed into a person. Then he married an Oneida woman. Then he got his name Hiawatha as he was called near where a lake was. They had a child, a girl they called Laughing-Water.

Things were going well where they lived when they got word that some enemies were coming from the north to attack their village and burn down their homes. So this Hiawatha told the leaders to gather all of the five nations for a meeting. They all arrived and when they all arrived, Hiawatha and his daughter, Laughing-Water, were coming by boat in a white canoe. Suddenly there was a noise and it seems they saw a great bird flying in the sky. It descended with its wings spread near the feet of Hiawatha and then Laughing-Water got on the back of the great bird. Then she said, "Farewell, my father."

Then the great bird spread its wings again and flew off and flew so high it pierced the clouds to where Hiawatha's mother had her home. At that point Hiwatha spoke and told them that the time was coming for him to return home and go back to the skyworld. He said, "Listen to what I will say as I advise you that those living in the north have great power and they will defeat a small group so the five nations have to use a single concern. You will only get strength and be safe if you help each other and make only one council fire and have only one pipe to smoke. Then there will be no bother and no fighting."

When Hiawatha finished talking, he got back in the canoe. Then they heard beautiful music coming from somewhere. Then slowly the white canoe lifted up and he went back in the sky. This is how it happened that the five nations joined together.